

Mourning Dove Hunter Questionnaire 2003

By Brian Dhuey and Keith Warnke

Abstract

Wisconsin held its first Mourning Dove season in the fall of 2003. There were approximately 24,500 people that hunted doves (8.4% of Small Game hunting authority holders). Hunters averaged 4.1 days afield pursuing doves and bagged 8.2 doves per season. Satisfaction rates were high with 48.1% of the hunters rating their dove hunting experience as "Very High" or "High". Most (96.1%) of the hunters who hunted doves in 2003 said that they would hunt doves again next year.

Methods

A Mourning Dove Hunter Questionnaire was mailed to approximately 6,000 Small Game authority holders (Fig. 1). These included current year, Conservation Patron, Resident Small Game, Sports, Senior Citizen Small Game, Junior Small Game, Non-resident Small Game, and Non-resident 5-day Small Game license holders. The sample was drawn in proportion to license sales at the time the season ended. Questionnaires were mailed at the end of the season, a second mailing was sent to 3,000 of the non-respondents. No effort was made to contact hunters that never responded to the survey. Input from non-respondents was not obtained so the effect of non-response bias could not be obtained. Data from all questionnaires were entered into the DNR UNIX production server and summarized using the Statistical Analysis System (SAS).

Results

Questionnaires were received from 2,211 hunters surveyed. Duplicate responses were removed, the response rate was 36.3%. Respondents to the questionnaire indicated that 8.4% of them hunted doves in 2003 (Table 1, Question 1). The most frequently stated reasons for not hunting were "No time", "Busy hunting other concurrent seasons" and "Do not believe in hunting doves". Of the respondents that said they hunted, 90.6% said they were registered with the federal Harvest Information Program (HIP) before hunting.

Days a field and mean kill per hunter varied by DNR region, but the statewide average was 4.1 days a field and 8.2 doves per hunter (Table 1, Question 3). Twenty-nine percent of the hunters reported killing doves that they were unable to retrieve. These hunters averaged 2.6 doves a season that they could not retrieve.

Most hunters hunted private land for doves, 71% (Table 1, Question 5). Hunting harvested crop fields and around water sources were the most used methods, 28.1% and 21.9% respectively.

Dove hunters rated their dove hunting experience as "Very High" or "High" 48.1% of the time. When compared to other type of hunting in Wisconsin, dove hunting was rated lower than all other major types of hunting (Table 1, Question 8). Of the respondents that hunted for doves this year, 96.1% said that they would hunt doves again next year.

When expanded to the larger population of small game hunters, more than 24,500 hunters pursued doves in Wisconsin in 2003. These hunters spent about 101,000 days afield and killed approximately 202,000 doves.

Table 1. *Results of the 2003 Mourning Dove Survey.*

Question 1. Did you hunt Mourning Doves during the 2003 season?

Response	Percent	Count
Yes	8.4%	180
No	91.6%	1,972

Question 1a. If NO, select the major (**most** important) reason for not hunting doves.

Response	Percent	Count
No time	28.7%	557
Do not believe in hunting doves	24.8%	481
No place to hunt	2.9%	57
No doves in my area	3.1%	61
Do not know how to hunt doves	3.7%	71
Busy hunting other concurrent seasons	25.7%	500
Other	11.1%	216

Question 2. Did you register with the Harvest Information Program (HIP)?

Response	Percent	Count
Yes	90.6%	164
No	9.4%	17

Question 3. Dove hunting activity by DNR regions.

Days Hunted

DNR Region	Count	Mean	Std. Dev.
Northeastern	74	3.4	2.7
Northern	16	3.7	6.0
South Central	54	4.6	5.2
Southeastern	57	5.4	7.8
West Central	26	2.2	1.2
Statewide	224	4.1	5.2

Kill

DNR Region	Count	Mean	Std. Dev.
Northeastern	74	6.2	5.7
Northern	16	3.0	2.2
South Central	54	11.1	9.9
Southeastern	57	10.0	9.8
West Central	26	5.3	5.0
Statewide	157	8.2	8.3

Question 4. Did you kill any doves that you were unable to retrieve?

DNR Region	Percent	Count
Northeastern	26.8%	15
Northern	0.0%	0
South Central	40.5%	17
Southeastern	29.2%	14
West Central	25.0%	5
Statewide	28.5%	51

Question 4a. If yes, how many

Mean	Std. Dev.
2.6	2.0

Question 5. What type of land did you do **MOST** of your dove hunting on?

DNR Region	Private Land	Public Land	Industrial Forest	Forest Crop Land
Northeastern	71.4%	25.0%	1.8%	1.8%
Northern	69.2%	23.1%	0.0%	7.7%
South Central	66.7%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Southeastern	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
West Central	70.0%	30.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Statewide	71.0%	27.4%	0.6%	1.1%

Question 6. Which **ONE** of the methods listed below did you use **MOST** often when hunting doves?

DNR Region	Harvested Crops	Un-Harvested Crops	Fallow	Water-Wetlands	Roost sites	Incidental	Stalk & Flush
Northeastern	28.6%	12.5%	5.4%	28.6%	3.6%	12.5%	8.9%
Northern	0.0%	0.0%	8.3%	8.3%	16.7%	41.7%	25.0%
South Central	21.4%	26.2%	4.8%	19.1%	11.9%	0.0%	16.7%
Southeastern	43.8%	14.6%	2.1%	18.8%	6.3%	2.1%	12.5%
West Central	20.0%	10.0%	10.0%	25.0%	10.0%	20.0%	5.0%
Statewide	28.1%	15.2%	5.1%	21.9%	7.9%	9.6%	12.4%

Question 7. Rate your satisfaction of your 2003 Wisconsin dove hunting experience.

DNR Region	Very High	High	About what I expected	Low	Very Low
Northeastern	19.6%	23.2%	51.8%	3.6%	1.8%
Northern	7.7%	7.7%	53.9%	15.4%	15.4%
South Central	23.8%	35.7%	35.7%	4.8%	0.0%
Southeastern	39.6%	16.7%	33.3%	8.3%	2.1%
West Central	30.0%	10.0%	50.0%	5.0%	5.0%
Statewide	26.3%	21.8%	43.0%	6.2%	2.8%

Question 8. Compare your dove hunting satisfaction to other types of hunting you may have done. (Select the one answer for each type of hunting listed)

Statewide

Hunting Type	Higher Satisfaction	Lower Satisfaction	Don't Hunt
Waterfowl Hunting	33.5%	50.9%	15.6%
Spring Turkey Hunting	20.4%	52.7%	27.0%
Fall Turkey Hunting	31.5%	32.7%	35.8%
Small Game Hunting	43.7%	51.7%	4.6%
Archery Deer Hunting	22.0%	49.4%	28.6%
Gun Deer Hunting	31.6%	60.9%	7.5%

Question 9. Did you take anyone under 16 years old with you dove hunting?

Response	Percent	Count
Yes	28.7%	51
No	71.4%	127

Question 10. Do you plan on hunting for doves again **next** year?

Response	Percent	Count
Yes	96.1%	170

No	4.0%	7
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2003 Wisconsin Dove Hunting Questionnaire

s. 23.09(2)(k), Wis. Stats.
Form 2300-297 (R 10/03)

Dear Fellow Hunter,

With the support of groups such as the United States Sportsmen's Alliance, the National Wild Turkey Federation, the Wisconsin Conservation Congress, the Wisconsin Dove Hunter's Association, and all those who supported the dove hunt, Wisconsin hunters had the opportunity to hunt doves in their home state for the first time in 2003. WDNR has the responsibility for proper management of all outdoor recreational activities in Wisconsin. To improve management and accurately assess participation and harvest, we survey hunters.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. It is important to respond whether, or how much, you hunted doves. All information will be used for dove hunting management in Wisconsin. Report only on yourself, not your hunting party or family, and only on your Wisconsin dove hunting.

When completed, reverse the flap on the questionnaire, tape the edge and mail. Using your stamp will save WDNR funds for management even though no postage is required to return the questionnaire.

Your response to this survey is needed for responsible dove hunting management and to help ensure the future of dove hunting in Wisconsin. Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey and your concern for Wisconsin's resources.

Sincerely,

Keith Warnke
Upland Ecologist

1. Did you hunt Mourning Doves during the 2003 season?

☐ Yes (Go to Question 2) ☐ No (Go to Question 1a)

1.a. IF NO, select the major (**most important**) reason for not hunting doves. (**Check only one**)

- ☐ No time
☐ Do not believe in hunting doves
☐ No place to hunt
☐ No doves in my area
☐ Do not know how to hunt doves
☐ Busy hunting other concurrent season
☐ Other: _____



Stop here and return the questionnaire if you did not hunt doves during the 2003 season.

2. Did you register with the Harvest Information Program (HIP)?

☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Dove hunting activity.

List each Wisconsin county where you hunted for doves	Number of days hunted for doves in each county	Number of doves bagged in each county
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Figure 1. 2003 Dove Hunter Questionnaire.

2003 Wisconsin Dove Hunting Questionnaire

s. 23.09(2)(k), Wis. Stats.
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<p>4. Did you kill any doves that you were unable to retrieve?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>4.a. If yes, how many?</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>8. Compare your dove hunting satisfaction to other types of hunting you may have done. (Select the one answer for each type of hunting listed)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Higher Satisfaction</th> <th>Lower Satisfaction</th> <th>Don't Hunt</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Waterfowl Hunting</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Spring Turkey Hunting</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fall Turkey Hunting</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Small Game Hunting</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Archery Deer Hunting</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gun Deer Hunting</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Higher Satisfaction	Lower Satisfaction	Don't Hunt	Waterfowl Hunting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spring Turkey Hunting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fall Turkey Hunting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Small Game Hunting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Archery Deer Hunting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gun Deer Hunting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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<p>5. What type of land did you do MOST of your dove hunting on? (Check only one)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Private land</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Public land</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Industrial forest land</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Forest crop land</p>	<p>9. Did you take anyone under 16 years old with you dove hunting?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>9.a. IF YES, how many?</p> <p>_____</p>																												
<p>6. Which ONE of the methods listed below did you use MOST often when hunting doves? (Check only one)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hunt around harvested crop fields</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hunt around un-harvested crop fields</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hunt around non-cropped (fallow) fields</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hunt around a water source or wetland</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hunt around a roost site</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Incidental to other types of hunting</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Stalk and flush feeding/roosting birds</p>	<p>10. Do you plan on hunting for doves again next year?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>																												
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Figure 1. 2003 Dove Hunter Questionnaire (continued).